

The PROMPTER

The Attic, The Pearls And Three Fine Girls

The audiences were enthusiastic and the energy on stage was intense as the cast and crew of *The Attic, The Pearls and Three Fine Girls* wound up our winter production. The three Fine sisters reunite upon the death of their father and find themselves re-living as adults the turmoil of their childhood relationships. The polarities of love and anger, rivalry and tenderness came alive on the stage as audiences were invited to explore their own sibling relationships.

With the exception of Gayle Heinrich, the cast and crew are now enjoying a well-deserved rest from theatre after the conclusion of a great run. Gayle is already in rehearsal for *The Island of Bliss* with Western Canada Theatre Company in Kamloops! She will return just in time to begin directing our Festival production *Dancock's Dance*.



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DANCOCK'S DANCE

And now on to our next production, and Festival entry, DANCOCK'S DANCE. Written by Canadian Guy Vanderhaeghe, this gripping drama is set in the North Battleford Insane Asylum during the flu epidemic of 1919. The playwright discovered a Public Works report which noted that, due to illness among staff, the inmates had run the place themselves during the epidemic. The play was written around this premise.

Director, Gayle Heinrich, has cast most of the show with some newcomers and some known faces, but is still looking for BRAUN, a middle-aged German immigrant. Some key crew positions also need to be filled: Set Decor; Props (furniture and props are minimal so these would be relatively easy jobs); Publicity; Programs (these will be a newspaper format and will include articles from the era - information about WWI and the Spanish influenza epidemic - a really great project for someone with an interest in this); Specialty Makeup; Sound Technician; Lighting Technician. The play runs from April 25 - May 3. But since this is our Festival entry, crew will be involved when we go to the O-Zone in Armstrong the week of May 10 - 17. Please consider being involved in this production.

For more information, or to offer to help in any of these areas, please contact Gayle (833-2175, gkheinrich@sunwave.net), Stage Manager Denise Reimer (804-0765, dreimer@jetstream.net), or Tracy Stacer (833-6847, tracy@shuswaptheatre.com).

WHERE DID EVERYBODY GO?

In November of 2007, Kim MacMillan led a 'Visioning' workshop that explored the current perception, and the future possibilities, of the Shuswap Theatre Society. Over the past several weeks, Ellen Gonella and I (our Visioning Subcommittee) have been sifting through the many suggestions and concerns that were raised at the workshop.

A lot of great ideas came out of the workshop, and eventually we would like to use all of them, but we felt that certain areas needed immediate action. The ongoing survival of a community theatre depends not only on its audience, but also on its volunteers. Over the past several years our list of 'Happy Helpers' has dwindled to the point where we are seeing the same people helping on every show. It has become an exciting (and rare) time when a new volunteer walks through our doors. As for our audience, we would like to see our faithful attendees joined by new faces.

We have proposed to the Theatre's Board of Directors that two new volunteer positions need to be created:

Volunteer Coordinator and Community Liaison.

These positions would require absolutely NO theatrical experience, so they are perfect for anyone who has been curious about the theatre, but hesitant to volunteer. The Volunteer Coordinator would create and maintain a volunteer database, and would help each show's Producer to fill crew positions. The Community Liaison would be a task for someone who is enthusiastic and energetic, loves to network, and is excited about being our community and media contact. Once we have finalized the actual job descriptions, we will be advertising the positions through every media we can think of, so keep your eyes and ears peeled for updates.

Finally, to anyone who has ever wondered what goes on 'behind the scenes', I cannot stress enough that a theatrical background is not a requirement for volunteering. If you've ever hammered a nail, held a paintbrush, sewn a seam, or served a cup of coffee, you're more experienced than you think!

Marion Huysmans



In this edition of the *Prompter*, we are highlighting two crew areas.

Spotlight on FRONT OF HOUSE and FOYER DISPLAY

During any production, the last two areas to receive attention are those of FOYER DISPLAY and FRONT OF HOUSE. However, far from being minor, these are the audience's introduction to any play. The smiling faces of those working on Front of House greet our patrons as they arrive. Then, while the audience members wait for the house doors to open, they are introduced to the actors and crew as well as the play, through the photographs and other items on display in the foyer.

The person in charge of **Foyer Display** reads the play, talks to the director and then plans how best to decorate, keeping in mind the theme of the production as well as colour, texture, etc. The pictures are taken by the photographer and sometimes, but not always, the same person will also decorate the foyer. If you are creative, you might consider this position.



Those working on **Front of House** are responsible for the comfort and safety of the audience. This crew creates the audience's first impression with their friendliness and efficiency. Tickets are sold and then collected as the audience enters the house. Refreshments are served before the play starts, at intermission and sometimes afterwards.

The person in charge draws up a schedule, purchases refreshments, deals with the money and ensures that everything is spic and span!

Often, newcomers to the Theatre choose Front of House as their first volunteer area. This is a great way to "get your feet wet" and meet others. If you've been thinking about getting involved perhaps one of these areas would be a good place to start. Contact the Theatre (832-9283 or inquiry@shuswaptheatre.com) if you are interested or for more information.

IMPROVISATIONAL THEATRE

With the Green Room available once more, the Improvisational Evenings are about to begin again. The next gatherings will be on Thursdays, March 6 and 20 at 7:00 PM. The participants are having a great time and hope more people will join them for an evening of theatre games. Please contact Peter Blacklock, pncblacklock@sunwave.net, if you have any questions.

Theatre Around the Valley

Asparagus Theatre, Armstrong

Sisters March 26 - April 5

Kelowna Actors Studio

The Fantasticks March 27 - April 13

Powerhouse Theatre, Vernon

Wit April 23 - May 3

SAS - Sullivan Campus

Nickolas Nickelby April 30 - May 2

Shakespeare Kelowna Theatre Society

MacBeth March 6 - 22

Sunshine Theatre, Kelowna

The Swingin' Sisters Club April 15 - 19

Western Canada Theatre, Kamloops

The Island of Bliss March 20 - 29

YES, BUT IS IT ART? - THE 'OLD WINDOW' PROJECT

The Shuswap District Arts Council has asked its member groups to participate in an art project using the old windows and frames that were replaced in the Arts Centre. Each group is to create a piece of 'window art' that will be displayed and auctioned off in March 2008.

I volunteered myself and Lisa Bennett (without her knowing!) for the Shuswap Theatre Society's contribution to the project, and to make things more interesting I agreed to take two of the windows. Lisa has created almost all of our show posters for the past few years, so I knew she would have some interesting ideas. As for myself, I thought painting a window would make a nice change from painting a set!

Prompter editor, Susan MacMillan asked me to outline our steps from design to execution. In the interest of accuracy, I have to admit that our 'creative process' usually begins with some of Lisa's delicious cocktails, followed by a brainstorming session. We knew the windows had to have a Theatrical theme, and we agreed on painting the window glass itself, so we



started researching appropriate images on the internet, looking for inspiration. Once we settled on a design, we then had to decide what technique to use for each of the windows.

One of the images we chose was perfect for a stained glass window effect. White glue mixed with the paint enabled us to duplicate the texture and translucency of stained glass (Lisa's two girls REALLY wanted to help with this!). The other window has more of a

'cartoon' feel to it, so I decided to keep it simple and just paint the image without any special techniques.

At the time I am writing this, the windows are still works in progress, so who knows what may have been done to them by the time Lisa and I are finished It could depend on the cocktails!

Marion Huysmans

[Come to the Art Gallery on Sunday March 30 to see the finished products of all the participating groups and perhaps bid on one of the creations! - Ed]

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